



State Capitol | Lansing, Michigan 48913
PH (517) 373.5932 | FAX (517) 373.5944
www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/senator/brown/

For Immediate Release
July 5, 2006

Contact: Matt Sweeney
(517) 373-5932

Sen. Brown's newly signed law a victory for agriculture, environment

LANSING – After several years of hard work and two gubernatorial vetoes, legislation sponsored by state Sen. Cameron S. Brown to help Michigan farmers implement technology that would ensure efficiency and environmental stewardship has finally been signed into law.

Senate Bill 538 became Public Act 254 after being approved by Gov. Jennifer Granholm, who vetoed a pair of similar bills in 2004.

“This is a tremendous victory both for Michigan’s agricultural industry – the second biggest industry in the state – and for Michigan’s environment,” said Brown, R-Fawn River Township. “I am pleased that the governor took advantage of this second chance to help farmers gain access to effective management practices that can produce a new source of renewable energy.”

Public Act 254 will allow Michigan farmers to obtain grants of up to \$200,000 through the Small Business Pollution Prevention Loan Program to build agricultural energy production systems, which may cost as much as \$2 million.

Methane digesters, one of the most common types of agricultural energy production systems, process animal waste using treatment technology that yields methane gas, and at the same time reduces the volume of solids and liquids. Harmful pathogens are neutralized and disturbing odors are eliminated. Other systems covered by Brown’s legislation include gasification and thermal depolymerization.

The energy produced can be used to generate electricity for the local farm operation, or it can be sold on the energy market.

Upon passage of the bill by the Legislature last month, representatives of the Michigan Agri-Business Association, the Michigan Allied Poultry Association, the Michigan Milk Producers and the Michigan Pork Producers joined Brown in signing a letter urging Granholm to sign the measure.

Michigan Farm Bureau also sent a letter to the governor in support.

“Today, more Michigan farmers than ever before have access to technologies that will help them run a cleaner, more efficient operation,” Brown said. “The farm and the environment have both won with the signing of this bill.”

###